

From the Heart

February is often associated with love and this month we would like to share with you what the Covenant Women are doing to show God's love to others. Enjoy!

~Jeramie-Lee Nelson, Equipping Ministry

The news from you....

Sarnia, ON Our women's ministry team is excited to be able to raise support for our very own Team going to Haiti this April to assist at Dr. Manno's Clinic. We've been busy planning an elegant evening to take place on March 6, complete with a delicious Prime Rib Dinner with all the trimmings, as well as entertainment and a Haiti Power Point presentation. The cost per plate is \$30.00 and since we are able to seat up to 128 people we hope to raise a significant amount for the team's needs. Businesses are donating some of the groceries needed and a handmade quilt has been donated to raffle off. One of our women's ministry team members, who will also be on the Haiti Team, has published her very own cookbook in order to raise the cost of her trip. We applaud her efforts, know that this particular cookbook is a gem because she's an excellent cook, and are sure it will sell "like hotcakes"! Knowing that Mission Trips can be life-changing experiences where God can reach into the depth of our being we are so grateful to have a small part in helping... from our heart to theirs and all the way to the people of Haiti! Trudy McIntosh

Norquay, Saskatchewan We had our annual meeting in January and combined it with a farewell for two of our ladies who are moving into retirement homes, Carol Jorgenson to Kamsack and Priscilla Clements to Saskatoon. We enjoyed a warm evening on a cold night with fellowship and cake.

In February, we are having our annual rip and roll. We invite ladies from the community to come and help us. We rip sheets and roll bandages, cut out and sew baby layettes, stitch a quilt and tie a quilt. We always have a quilt on hand to give families that are victims of fire. It is a great evening of laughter, and a feeling that we can make difference no matter how small our community is and how far away we are.

Hope Covenant (Strathmore, AB)

a) We have a team of 9 going to Haiti from April 7-18 to work in the Ebenezer Clinic in Limbe. The team has been meeting to prepare and pray for the trip.

b) We have had a group of women exploring the possibilities of "women mentoring women" and "life coaching" - two new ideas to provide support to women with needs in our community.

Prince Albert, SK A list of the 'missions' we are involved in: We give monthly, practical donations, such as pampers and baby notions, to the local Children's Haven; each February we send care packages (love gifts) to students away from home; we have a monthly visitation program (singing, a devotional, and one-on-one conversing) at two care homes; we send funds to Canada WM's projects, such as the ECCC project, Special Interest Missionary, etc. Much of the funds for this is raised from the sale of items at our annual Country Store (baked goods and craft items) as well as scheduled perogy/meat pie-making bees; we also contribute to the Break the Chains project and

to Kernels of Hope; we routinely roll bandages and make baby layettes and midwife kits for the Congo; occasionally, we serve soup at the local soup kitchen.

Balfour, BC The Nelson, Balfour, and Junction Covenant Church have had a number of women go on mission trips to Mexico. Here is one woman's account (Deb Storey) of the ministries the women participated in while on the most recent mission trip:

We take down and distribute quilts and sweaters that are made by the ladies in our congregations. There were 35 sweaters of all different sizes to give out. We met with a ladies bible study group - we had a devotional by one of the Mexican ladies (and a translator), made bead bracelets and enjoyed s'mores that we made on the gas stove in the kitchen! We had a bible study with a couple of ladies who were very young and recent widows. We also made bracelets with them and brought them baby blankets and some sweaters. We helped out with all stages of construction and painting on the school of ministry that is being built by one of the local churches. We played soccer in one of the neighborhood parks and then distributed clothes and invitations for the kids to come to church that Sunday. A family did bring 3 of their kids the next week! One of our ladies made a graduation dress for a young girl who didn't have a dress to wear for her high school prom. We ministered to a single mom with 5 daughters who lives and works in a local dump. We took them blankets, sweaters, etc. and arranged for the men in our group to do some home renovations for her!

We spent an afternoon at the boy's orphanage, playing games, doing face paints, putting on a skit and of course, handing out some more sweaters! It was the most awesome week for ministry - It was such a blessing to meet and worship with our sisters in Christ!

Erickson, BC Here at Erickson missions is presently all wrapped up in bandages. For those who are trying to "reuse", we are the church in town that accepts donations of used sheets. But it really starts with the Tuesday group who is doing the Ripping and sewing. It is all in preparation for the VBS program where eager kids do the rolling (lots of it). Then the ziplock bags are boxed along with the 40+ layettes that have been sewn. At WM Sunday following the powerpoint "The Journey of a Bandage" we will pray for these supplies and the recipients in the Congo. WM is also committed to giving above and beyond to the Congo Shipping Fund. Through these compassionate acts, our entire church is sharing in this ministry to our Congolese brothers and sisters.

Emmanuel (Surrey, BC) Our group heads for the Chilean Heartland, March 5 – 15, 2009. Templo Renacer Covenant Church is new and needs help in growing, and with outreach efforts to the community. Pastor Darwin and Elaine Mora serve this congregation and community. Pastor Darwin and Elaine, along with their congregation of about 30 members, are hoping some day to provide meals for children in the area before and after school, as many in the area are not fed well, due to poverty. The trip will include a variety of opportunities. As we head for Chile, please pray for the people of Coelemu - that God would prepare the church and the community to have opportunity to interact together, and that we will be able to greatly support the congregation in these efforts during our time together. More information is available on the website.

You asked for it...

Some of you have asked about retreat ideas. For a great resource, check out:
<http://www.covchurch.org/women/ministries/wm-leaders/denominational-handbook>
Then let us know how it worked for you!

The news from Canada's WM team...

Coordinators: Korleen Stapleton & Pattie Peterson
Secretary: Judy Nelson
Equipping: Jeramie-Lee Nelson
CM&J: Natasha Westerhoud
Global Ministry: Faith Campbell
Gretchen Johnson: Liaison to Denominational WM

Canada WM has a website! Check us out on www.canadacovenantchurch.org/womenministries. Our latest newsletter (Fall '08) and monthly e-letters will be available with a lot of other information for you and your local group!

Our theme for the March e-letter will be "Women in Ministry". We will highlight how all of you are involved in ministry. Tell us about the programs that inspire others or about the spur-of-the-moment opportunity you had to share God's love with someone else. Along the same lines, WM is excited to launch our Canadian version of "Balcony Women" and we're looking forward to hearing from you about how another woman has impacted your life! This will be a great chance to acknowledge that special Sunday School Teacher or that friend who has always made the time to talk with you. We'll include more details in the following e-letters and the stories will be featured online and in the Spring newsletter.

Reminder:

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be April 23-25 at Green Timbers, Surrey, BC. We are thrilled to have Trinity Abila of California. She has been highly recommended as a Ministry Coach and has travelled to Colombia to train WM there. She also serves the Gold Mountain area of Northern California. Spotlight on AGM of Women Ministries She will be available Friday afternoon and Saturday for consultation with WM groups, individuals or pastors in crafting a Women Ministry that reflects your church's needs. Don't forget the Gift Boutique on Friday. The items you bring for sale are a donation toward the administrative fund of Women Ministries, specifically the Travel Fund.

Updates:

Faith Campbell, Global Ministry:
We have heard from our Special Interest Missionary - Cheryl Anderson. She has requested some audio-visual equipment for the work where she is involved in Guayaquil, Ecuador. This is our Special Interest Missionary Project for this year. People in

Canada may give to this special project. We also had a recent newsletter from our Missionary Encouragement Fund recipient, Melissa Johnson. She is busy in her work of teaching in Shell, Ecuador. Before Christmas, she encountered a visa challenge that had her return to Canada for a few weeks. She is now back in "full swing" as she serves Jesus in Shell.

Addendum:

Emmanuel Covenant – Surrey, BC heads for Chilean Heartland, March 5 – 15, 2009

The idea started a couple of years ago, when one of our young women, expressed a passion for going on a mission trip. Seeing the WM "Educate the Girls" DVD inspired her to turn to her mom in the church service and say "I'm going to Africa, don't even try to stop me!" While Africa is not our current destination, that same young woman, along with 11 others are departing for Coelemu, Chile early in March. We are a group of young and older, men, women and youth. Our unique blend of abilities and interests seem to be just what is needed for this particular trip. Plans are coming into place - although so much of the "final touches" cannot happen until we actually get there, and start working alongside the congregation. We can hardly wait!

Coelemu, of a term in Mapudungun which means "forest of the concones," a Chilean owl. The main industry includes agriculture and the forest industry. Located in a town of about 18,000, including outlying areas, Templo Renacer Covenant Church is new and needs help in growing, and with outreach efforts to the community. Pastor Darwin and Elaine Mora serve this congregation and community. Pastor Darwin and Elaine, along with their congregation of about 30 members, are hoping some day to provide meals for children in the area before and after school, as many in the area are not fed well, due to poverty. There are also about 160 youth who come and stay in town during the week to attend school. The pastor's wife is the director of the dorm, and we have much opportunity to work with the students during the week. Connecting with families in the community will also be part of the work of the mission trip.

The trip will include a variety of opportunities. Women ministries - teaching women how to make a few different jewelry pieces, and then leaving them with ample supplies to keep at it. They will be selling the jewelry in a bigger town about 1 hr away (more tourists in the other town); the funds will help support their church building project or ministry outreach efforts. We are also hoping to encourage the women of the church with prayer, and with affirmation of their call to serve and lead others in following Christ. While the women are learning how to make jewelry, a few members of the team will be holding a young kids time which will include stories, songs, and puppets. Another few team members will be holding an afternoon sports camp for teens, ages 13-18 (softball). English classes with students in the local school, and concurrently with adults at the church will be held for about 1.5 hours in the early evening. We will helping the local congregation a bit with the ongoing work they are doing on their church building and adjoining structure - which includes 2 very small washrooms, and a little kitchen area - eventually to be used for making/serving meals to children on their way to school

in the morning (many go without). We have an electrician coming along - and go figure - one of the things they urgently need right now, is for someone to do the electrical wiring on their church building (it is a one room, concrete block structure - now has a roof, but not sure if the windows are installed!) The building supplies will all be purchased in advance of us arriving. We just have to bring some tools with us, many which will be left in Coelemu for later use. A Thursday night youth event, and a Friday night outreach event are being planned with an invitation extended to the community, which will also include a meal. We have several Spanish worship CD's a few of us are listening to and practicing, so that hopefully, we will be able to blend together with the worship team from the church and sing together. While there are many pieces to this trip - the most important thing we can accomplish is to get to know the people, and to stop and visit with them whenever the opportunity arises, and see where God leads in the conversations. If you are interested in receiving trip updates by email, while the Emmanuel mission team is in Chile, please send your email address to Gerry Tiede j7tiede7@shaw.ca. There is a small café in the town that we should be able to hook up to the internet.

As we head for Chile, please pray for the people of Coelemu - that God would prepare the church and the community to have opportunity to interact together, and that we will be able to greatly support the congregation in these efforts during our time together.

Gloria a Dios